

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 are all the claims pending in the application.

I. Proposed Drawing Corrections

Applicants submit herewith a proposed drawing correction to indicate that Fig. 9 is directed to a prior art device. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request approval thereof.

II. Response to Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

Claims 1-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly indefinite. The Examiner asserts that it is unclear where the different elements are with respect to a cross-section of the transfective polarizer. In paragraph a on page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner asserts that in claim 5, it is unclear whether the droplets are made up of two or more kinds of polymers or if the matrix is made up of one polymer and the droplets of another kind of polymer.

With respect to claims 12, 13 and 14, the Examiner questions what a cross-section of the laminate looks like and what the following phrases mean as set forth in paragraphs b, c, and d on page 2 of the Office Action:

b) in claim 12, the phrase, "laminating the transfective polarizer, a light source and a reflector in this order";

c) in claim 13, the phrase, "laminating the transfective polarizer, a light transmitting plate having a light source placed on the edge and a reflector in this order";

d) in claim 14, the phrase, "placing the polarizing light source, a liquid crystal cell and a dichroic polarizer in this order."

Applicants have amended claim 5 to clarify that the phrase “which is made of two or more kinds of polymers” refers to the polymer film, thereby obviating the rejection as to claim 5.

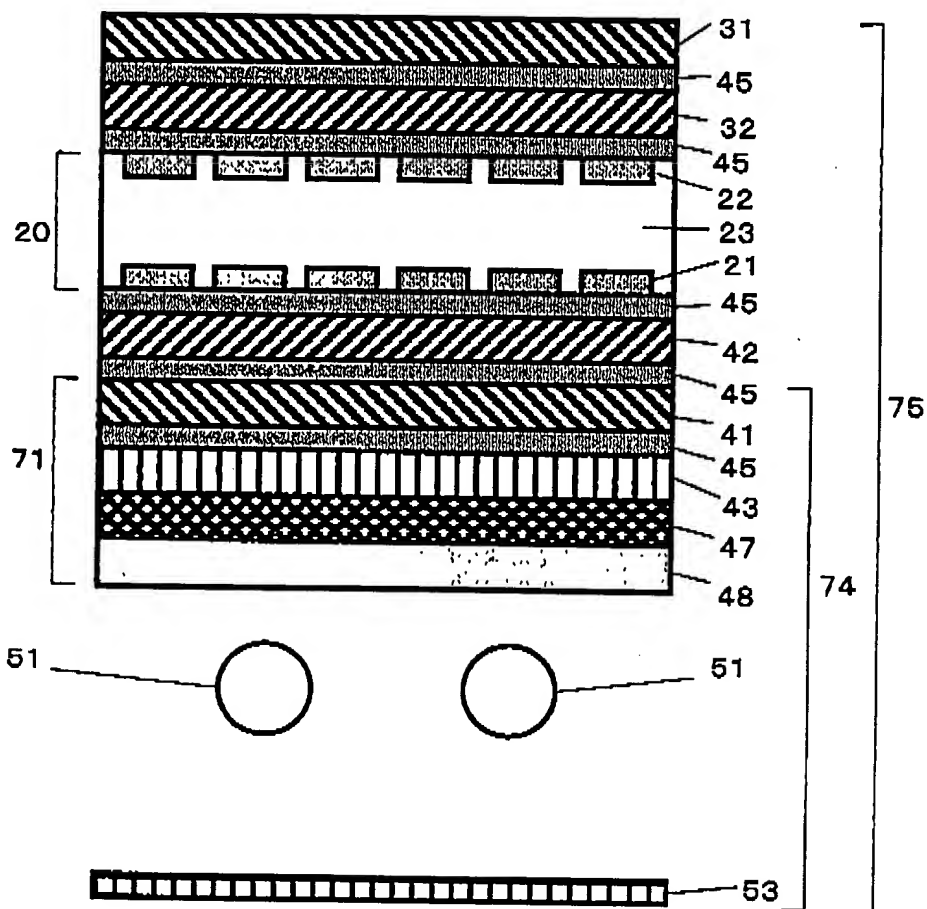
Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection as to claims 12, 13 and 14. Applicants respectfully submit that in the specification, Figs. 1 and 2 are indicated as providing a sectional view of the transfective polarizer of the invention. Further on page 6, line 23 to page 7, line 14, the order of lamination of the dichroic polarizer, reflective polarizer and transflector in preferred embodiments of the claimed invention are disclosed. Thus, when viewed in light of the specification, one of ordinary skill in the art would be able to ascertain the scope of the claim with respect to where the elements of the claimed invention are, i.e., the dichroic polarizer, the reflective polarizer, and the transflector (see claim 1).

Further, Applicants provide the following illustration, for the Examiner’s convenience, showing an example of a polarizing light source device of claim 12 based upon Fig. 8. In addition, element 74 of Fig. 8 is an example of claim 13 and element 75 of Fig. 8 is an example of claim 14.

Accordingly , Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.



Amendment Under 37 C.F.R § 1.111
U.S. Application No. 09/776,671



III. Response to Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1-4, 6-8, 12-14 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Weber et al.

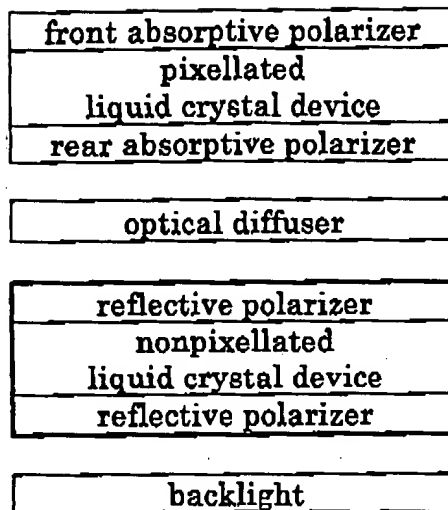
The Examiner relies on Weber et al for the disclosure of a transflective polarizer comprising a dichroic polarizer, a reflective polarizer and a transflector, wherein the two reflective polarizers are crossed and the polarization orientation of the dichroic (absorptive) polarizer is parallel to the transmission polarization orientation of the reflective polarizer. The Examiner also asserts that Weber et al disclose the elements recited in dependent claims 2-4, 6-8, 12-14 and 16:

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection and submit that Weber et al does not teach all of the elements of the claims, and therefore cannot be said to anticipate the claimed invention.

As disclosed in column 2, lines 5-13, Weber et al discloses that a passive transflector (which is an optical device operated in a single state as a transmitter and a reflector) tends to be inefficient as both a transmitter and a reflector.

Accordingly, Weber et al provides a device comprising a switchable optical panel having two reflective polarizers and a means for switching the panel between the reflecting state and the transmitting state.

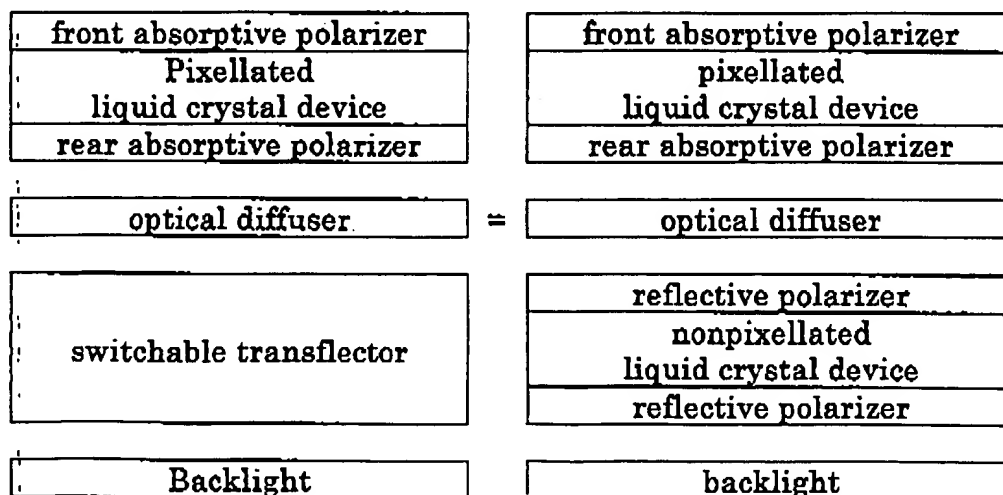
The structure of the device provided by Weber et al is illustrated as below in accordance with the disclosure of Weber et al (see column 3, lines 52 to column 4, line 8, column 11, line 42 to column 12, line 26, and Fig. 9).



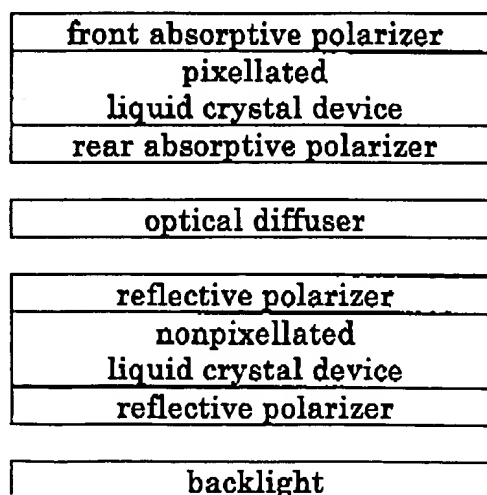
Weber et al.

On the other hand, the present invention is a transflective polarizer comprising a dichroic polarizer, a reflective polarizer and a translector, wherein a transmission axis of the dichroic polarizer and a transmission axis of the reflective polarizer are directed in the same direction, as recited in claim 1.

The comparison between a transflective polarizer provided by Weber et al and an example of the transflective polarizer of the present invention is illustrated below.



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As is apparent from the illustration above, one of the differences between Weber et al. and the present invention is the transflector layer of the present invention. That is, the transflector disclosed by Weber et al has a pair of reflective polarizers and Weber et al calls for a transflector including a reflective polarizer. On the other hand, the transflector of the present invention does not include a reflective polarizer.

As described in the present specification at page 11 lines 4-20, the transflector of the present invention is a layer in which part of the incident light transmits and the remaining part reflects. For the transflector, layers obtained by dispersing particles or voids having different refractive indices from the resin composed of a resin film into a transparent or translucent resin film, layers obtained by forming a hardened film of a light or heat-setting resin comprising dispersed particles or voids having different refractive indices on a transparent or translucent resin film, layers obtained by providing a metal thin layer on a transparent or translucent resin film, layers comprising a multi-layer laminate composed of two or more polymer films and the like, can be used alone or in lamination of two or more of these layers.

Therefore, the transflector of the present invention does not include a reflective polarizer, and further, the transflector of the present invention is distinct from the reflective polarizer disclosed by Weber et al. Thus, the present invention is different from Weber et al and is not anticipated by Weber et al. Moreover, the object of the present invention is different from that of Weber et al and Weber et al does not teach or suggest the present invention.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

IV. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

A. Weber et al in view of Cobb, Jr.

Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Weber et al in view of Cobb, Jr., et al (US 6,018,419).

B. Weber et al in view of Perregaux et al

Claims 10-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Weber et al in view of Perregaux et al.

C. Weber et al in view of Ketchpel

Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Weber et al in view of Ketchpel.

D. Weber et al in view of Inoue et al

Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Weber et al in view of Inoue et al.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections and submit that that Weber et al does not teach or suggest all of the elements of the claimed invention as previously discussed. None of Cobb, Jr., et al, Perregaux et al, Ketchpel, et al, or Inoue et al cure the deficiencies of Weber et al. Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art would not have had a reasonable expectation of achieving the claimed invention based upon the combination of Weber et al and Cobb, Jr., et al,

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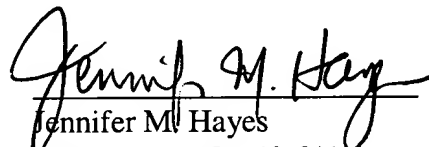
Perregaux et al, Ketchpel, et al, or Inoue et al. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103.

V. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

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PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

Date: January 2, 2003

APPENDIX
VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS:

The claims are amended as follows:

5. (Amended) The transflective polarizer according to claim 1, wherein the reflective polarizer is a polymer film, which is made of two or more kinds of polymers, consisting of a continuous polymer matrix with droplets dispersed therein ~~which is made of two or more kinds of polymers.~~